



Services for veterans

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Veterans are eligible for wide array of employment-related services

WorkSource has specialists who focus solely on veterans

State agencies work together to meet each veteran's needs

Early contact with veterans is a key to success

The Employment Security Department provides a wide array of services to help military veterans find jobs and to support them financially while they look and/or train for work. Most of these services are arranged or provided through WorkSource offices that are located all over Washington and at the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Lewis.

More on employment services for veterans

Federal funding ~ The Employment Security Department applies annually to the federal Department of Labor for grant funds that are available under the Jobs for Veterans Act. These funds are allocated based on the number of unemployed military veterans in our state. Washington state's funding has consistently remained about \$4 million per year.

The funds are used solely to support two categories of veterans specialists (local veterans-employment representatives and disabled-veterans outreach program specialists) at the WorkSource offices; no state funding is used for these positions. The veterans specialists are responsible for promoting the hiring of veterans, particularly recently discharged veterans, and assisting veterans who face significant barriers to getting hired. They also work with local businesses that hold federal contracts to help them recruit veteran candidates to fill vacancies.

Coordination with other agencies ~ WorkSource staff partner with the federal Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Division to coordinate the right mix of services that each veteran needs to prepare for and find a job. For example, veterans have access to a range of skill-development opportunities (which might range from a one-day class to a vocational course to an apprenticeship or a college degree). The veterans specialists also provide information and counseling on how to look for a job, referrals to job openings and labor-market information about the types of jobs that are in demand in their communities.

WorkSource works with the state's Department of Veterans Affairs to provide employment assistance to veterans enrolled in the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program and to residents of the Building 9 Veteran Transitional Housing Project in Retsil.

Coordination with the military ~ WorkSource has a veterans specialist embedded within the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Lewis, providing services to members of all branches of the military (including active-duty, National Guard and the reserves) who were injured in combat. The specialist identifies potential occupations, performs skill and interest assessments and prepares the veterans for the transition to civilian life.

WorkSource also participates in events hosted by the state and federal military departments for National Guard and active-duty members who are scheduled to

return from federal activation or to be discharged. The WorkSource veteran specialists provide information about eligibility for unemployment-insurance benefits, the types of services available through local WorkSource offices, the availability of training and apprenticeship programs and other programs for which they are eligible.

Apprentice programs hone skills for good-paying jobs

Apprenticeship programs ~ Many veterans have skills that transfer well into the construction industry, but they lack the formal training and certifications that may be required. Apprenticeships are a good way to complete their training while earning a living and gaining valuable on-the-job-experience. WorkSource employment counselors refer veterans to any of the registered apprenticeship programs in the state and to the Helmets-to-Hard-Hats apprenticeship program operated by the Building & Construction Trades Council. Helmets-to-Hard-Hats was created specifically to recruit and streamline the application and screening process to encourage veterans to enter the construction industry.

Website makes it easier for employers and veterans to connect

Veterans preference ~ Employment Security enhanced the WorkSource website to make it easier for employers and veterans to find each other. The changes support a [2011 state law](#) that granted legal protection to companies who want to give military veterans a preference in their hiring decisions.

- Job-seeking veterans and eligible spouses who post their résumés on go2worksource.com can check a box that makes their military status visible to employers who want to hire veterans. When employers search the site for job candidates, they can search for veterans' résumés.
- Employers who post jobs on go2worksource.biz can check a box indicating they will give veterans a hiring preference – and veterans can search the site for “veterans preference” jobs.

Targeted jobs initiative helps veterans get back to work

Gold Card ~ The federal Department of Labor offers a special employment initiative for post-9/11 veterans called Gold Card. Eligible veterans can present the Gold Card at a local WorkSource center to receive a six-month enhanced package of services that includes:

- Case management
- Skill assessments and interest surveys
- Career guidance
- Job-search assistance

Contacts

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